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INFO RUEHAA/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 3597  
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA 9810  
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 4211  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0101  
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 0043  
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 0089  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 3816  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 2092  
RUEHK/T/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 0189  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0761  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0933  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0075  
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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN AND DRL

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TAGS: PHUM PGOV UZ

SUBJECT: GOU AMNESTIES HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST BOZORBOEV

REF: A. 07 TASHKENT 2084

1B. 07 TASHKENT 2183

Classified By: POLOFF R. FITZMAURICE FOR REASONS 1.4 (B, D)

¶1. (U) On January 4, the Associated Press reported that Syrdarya province Ezgulik Deputy Chairman Karim Bozorboev, who was convicted of fraud and sentenced to three and half years' imprisonment in November (ref A), was amnestied and released from prison.

¶2. (C) On January 7, Ezgulik Deputy Chairman Abdurakhmon Tashanov confirmed to poloff that Bozorboev was amnestied by the Guliston Criminal Court during his appeal hearing on January 4. Tashanov was unsure whether Bozorboev was amnestied only after his appeal was unsuccessful, or whether he was amnestied before his appeal was fully considered, although he believed the former was more likely. Tashanov reported that Bozorboev was in good health and he promised to arrange a meeting for poloff soon. He had not heard of any plans to amnesty other imprisoned Ezgulik activists.

¶3. (C) Four other Ezgulik activists have been convicted of politically-motivated charges in recent years and are still languishing in Uzbek prisons: Abdurasul Khudaynazarov, Ulugbek Kattabekov, Mukhammadali Karabaev, and Dilmurod Mukhitdinov. Kattabekov was chair of the Jizzakh province branch of Ezgulik and had actively investigated charges of corruption against local authorities. In May 2005, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment on politically-motivated charges of fraud and blackmail. Khudaynazarov was chair of the Tashkent province branch of Ezgulik and actively investigated charges of corruption against local authorities. In January 2006, he was sentenced to nine years' imprisonment on politically-motivated charges of blackmail and fraud. Nazarov was chairman of the Zarbdor district office of Ezgulik in Jizzakh province. In July 2006, he was sentenced to three and one-half years' imprisonment on politically-motivated charges of extortion. In 2006, a court in the Ferghana Valley sentenced Ezgulik

member Muhitdinov to five years' imprisonment on politically-motivated charges of anti-constitutional activity. Mukhitdinov was reportedly tortured in prison this year and suffered two broken arms.

¶4. (C) Comment: Bozorboev is the first political prisoner to be released under the December 2007 amnesty (ref B). While we of course welcome his release, Bozorboev's amnesty (as opposed to outright acquittal) conveniently allows GOU authorities to maintain the fiction that he was in fact guilty of the charges against him, which we believe were politically-motivated. We will continue to press the Uzbek government to release more political prisoners over the next few months as part of the amnesty.

NORLAND